



JOSHUA A. LEACH.

"Here the architect
Did not with curious skill a pile erect.
Of carved marble, touch, or porphyry,
But built a house for hospitality."

"Rare are the buttons of a Roman's breeches,
In antiquarian eyes surpassing riches:
Rare is each crack'd, black, rotten, earthen dish,
That held of ancient Rome the flesh and fish."

We write of the founder of the great Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, Joshua A. Leach. In doing this, we write history—modern history. Men are living, still in the prime of their manhood who remember the time when the country, with 70,268 miles of railroads and 20,000 locomotive firemen, could not boast of a Locomotive Firemen's Brotherhood, that time was as late as 1873; sixteen years ago. There were at that time not less than 17,000 locomotive engines in operation, every one of which required a

fireman. Each fireman stood alone in his perilous work. There were no brotherhood ties for him; no brotherhood grasp of the hand; no signs of recognition; no fraternal sympathy; no snug harbor of a Lodge room; no place in all the world where firemen could meet for the interchange of thought and feeling; no fund upon which the unfortunate could draw, in time of sickness or other disability; nor was there any provision for the widow and the orphan, when death came by disease or disaster to the husband and father, and shrouded his humble home in gloom.

How fondly the world cherishes the names, when known, of the men who have planned cathedral or triumphal arch, who have sculptured a Venus, or painted a scene of The Last Judgment, and when forgotten,

how industriously they are sought after that they may be rescued from oblivion.

We do not write to underestimate a Phidias, a Michael Angelo, or a Raphael, nor to overestimate the labors of men in the humble walks of life; and yet, we deem it true, that the man, however circumscribed his sphere, however humble his position, however obscure and unknown, who has "built a house for hospitality," stands higher, and eternally higher, than the man who sculptured a *Venus de Medici*, or planned Peter's dome. As an illustration of our theory, Abou Ben Adhem's experience is conclusive:—

"ABOU BEN ADHEM, (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?' the vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answer'd—The names of those who love the
Lord.
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow-men,'
The Angel wrote and vanish'd. The next night
It came again, with a great awakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had
bless'd.
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest."

Joshua A. Leach, the subject of this sketch, and whose portrait we introduce, is a native-born Irishman, having first seen the light near Nenagh, county of Tipperary, on the 6th day of May, 1842. He possesses, in a marked degree, the generous traits of his countrymen. His nature is eminently sympathetic. Like Abou Ben Adhem, he loves his fellow man and is ready, on all occasions to lend a helping hand, when he sees distress, and it was this noble trait in his character that prompted him to set about the work in the year, 1873, to organize the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. Brother Leach in 1869, when twenty-seven years of age, took the position of fireman on the Erie railroad, and continued in the employment of that road till 1877. Many incidents during this period of eight years impressed him with the great importance of an organization such as was finally established in 1873. During the period between 1869 and 1873, a sad accident occurred, which perhaps more than any other aroused Brother Leach to action. A fellow fireman was killed, leaving a wife totally destitute. The unfortunate man received christian sepulture at the hands of his fellow firemen, and then to provide for the sorrowing widow, Brother Leach sought among his comrades to raise money to send the stricken woman away to her parents. This done, agitation began relating to the organization of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, the result of which was that on the evening

of December 1st, 1873, at the town of Port Jervis, N. Y., the Brotherhood came into existence—fifteen years and seven months ago—on that ever memorable evening, December 1st, 1873, thirteen locomotive firemen obligated themselves, and launched the Brotherhood to battle against whatever adversities fate might have in store for it. This little band had faith in their fellowmen. They knew they were right, and with dauntless courage, they flung the Brotherhood banner to the breeze and asked for recruits. Deer Park Lodge, No. 1, with a membership of THIRTEEN was the GRAND LODGE. It was the PIONEER LODGE. Grand it was in faith and courage. The Brotherhood required a GRAND MASTER, an executive head, a leader, and the heroic THIRTEEN deeply sensible of the importance of the position, canvassed for the right man. Everything depended upon a wise selection. The Grand Master must be wise, cautious and intrepid. He must be a man of energy and zeal, willing to make sacrifices of time and money; willing to work for the welfare of others and to find his reward in the consciousness of having done something for the amelioration of the conditions of his fellowman. The choice fell upon

JOSHUA A. LEACH.

How well he filled the position in the early days of the Brotherhood, is the theme of ceaseless eulogiums. The Brotherhood is now great, rich, and prosperous—but in its infancy and weakness, disregarded, opposed and condemned, it required men of fidelity and courage to stand by it in evil report and uphold its principles in the fierce storms of opposition it was called upon to resist. This was done by its first Grand Master, Joshua A. Leach, who now, verging upon a veteran of a half century, has a right to contemplate with glowing pride the continental dimensions of a superstructure of which he helped to lay the foundations and superintend its early growth. Brother Leach was Grand Master of the Brotherhood from 1873, when it had one Lodge and thirteen members, to 1876 when it numbered its members by thousands, an advancement of which anyone might feel content.

Since 1877, when Brother Leach severed his connection with the Erie railroad, his lot has been cast in the west where he has been connected with various roads, except about two years when he was Chief of the Fire Department of Nebraska City.

He is now a citizen of Sedalia, Mo., and is in the employ of the Missouri Pacific, in the enjoyment of health and of that proportion of the good things of the world, which usually falls to the lot of a railroad employé. In the bosom of his family, consisting of a wife and two children, the life of Brother Leach flows peacefully along; his unobtrusive

sive home being richly blessed with affection and contentment without which, a palace is a prison.

In his devotion to the interests of the Brotherhood, Brother Leach has always had the ardent and efficient support of his noble wife, who unaided, and with her own hands, made the first set of regalias ever worn by the members of the B. of L. F. She is a splendid woman and still profoundly interested in the welfare of the Order, of which her husband was one of the founders and its first Grand Master.

We have briefly outlined what Brother Joshua A. Leach, in the days of his manhood's prime, accomplished for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. For the good work performed the great Brotherhood owes Brother Leach a debt of gratitude.

"To the generous mind
The heaviest debt is that of gratitude,
When 'tis not in our power to repay it."

Such were the words of Franklin, but the debt of gratitude which the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen owes Joshua A. Leach for his services in laying the foundations of the Order, and for his services as first Grand Master, it can pay—easily and without sacrifice. What shall be the token of the Brotherhood's sense of obligation and thankfulness? In this case, let all speak at once if the question inspires grateful feelings. Shall it be a comfortable home? Why not that? Who will second the motion that Brother Leach, his wife and children, in response to a debt of gratitude paid by the great Brotherhood of which he may be justly said to be the Father, shall be able to say—
"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may
 roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

His own home the gift of a Brotherhood which since its organization, has been a ceaseless benediction to thousands.

FRIENDSHIP.

FRRIENDSHIP to every willing mind
 Opens a heavenly treasure;
There may the sons of sorrow find
 Sources of real pleasure.
See what employment men pursue,
Then you will own my words are true;
Friendship alone unfolds to view
 Sources of real pleasure.

Poor are the joys which fools esteem
 Fading and transitory;
Mirth is as fleeting as a dream
 Or a delusive story;
Luxury leaves a sting behind,
Wounding the body and the mind,
Only in friendship can we find
 Pleasure and solid glory.

Beauty, with all its gaudy shows,
 Is but a painted bubble;
Short is the triumph wit bestows,
 Full of deceit and trouble;
Fame, like a shadow, flies away;
Titles and dignities decay;
Nothing but friendship can display
 Joys that are free from trouble.

Learning, that boasting, glittering thing,
 Scarcely is worth possessing;
Riches, forever on the wing,
 Can not be called a blessing.
Sensual pleasures swell desire,
Just as the fuel feeds the fire;
Friendship can real bliss inspire—
 Bliss that is worth possessing.

Happy the man who has a friend
 Formed by the God of Nature;
Well may he feel and recommend
 Friendship for his Creator;
Then as our hands in friendship join,
So let our social powers combine,
Ruled by a passion most divine,
 Friendship with our Creator.

—Anon